

B.A.R.G. News

Volume 19 Issue 1

February 1996

The Morse Debate - What started it?

Morse users send out an SOS

RADIO HAMS are not known for kicking up a stink, but recent moves by Britain and New Zealand to change the regulations governing amateur radio have incensed many of them, splitting this normally sedate community into two factions. At present, amateurs around the world must pass a Morse Code exam before they can take to the airwaves at certain frequencies. Now the two governments want to scrap the exam, which many fear will spell the end for Morse Code and swamp the long-distance frequencies with other signals.

Samuel Morse invented his code of long and short pulses in the late 1830s. It was first used to send messages down telegraph wires and later for radio. The beauty of the system lies in its robustness. As long as the operator can hear tone pulses above the background noise and static, the message gets through. The Transmitter and Receiver can be very cheap and the tone signal takes up far less space in the radio spectrum than speech or other data. So Morse is ideal for sending messages over long distances between the worlds 6 Million registered radio hams. The I.T.U. in Geneva allocates



the amateur bands and governments must reserve the choice HF bands free for those who have struggled to learn enough Morse to pass the exam. The HF bands at below 30 megahertz are best for long distance communication because at these frequencies the signals reflect off the upper atmosphere and 'skip' across continents. But last year the New Zealand government broke the ranks and proposed an end to the Morse test. In Britain the Radio Communications Agency supported the move. This would throw open the airwaves to anyone who could afford the equipment and a nominal licence fee of around \$40 per year.

An affiliate of the
Wireless Institute
of Australia (W.I.A.)
founded 1910



One member of the First Class Operator's Club, which relies on Morse, says "The test acts as a filter which stops the nine HF bands getting too crowded. Without it there will be very little new blood with Morse skills."

Another amateur who has used Morse for 40 years wants the test to stay and says "Morse is a great leveller, it is classless. You can't tell someones accent."

But yet another amateur, who has been on air for 35 years says "there is no need to continue with the test. There may be someone stranded with a weak transmitter and an aerial up a tree who can only get through by using Morse, but on any frequency there will be thousands of people listening and some of them will know Morse."

Next month (February '96) the Radio Society of Great Britain will send out a questionnaire to all 60,000 amateur licence holders in Britain to discover how many want to retain the Morse requirement. The Society is also asking other Societies in Europe and the Eastern Bloc to conduct similar research and take their findings to the IARC conference to be held in October. The ITU will make the final decision at its conference in 1999.

*Reprinted from the 'New Scientist' Jan '96.
Contributed by John VK3CFH.*



BALLARAT AMATEUR RADIO GROUP INC.

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CLUB STATION

VK3 BML

REPEATERS	VK3RBA (Voice)	146.750 MHz. - Mt.Buninyong.
	VK3RBS (Voice)	146.900 MHz. - Smeaton Hill
	VK 3RPC (Packet)	144.750 MHz. - Mt. Warrenheip.
	VK3RBU (Voice)	438.475 MHz. - Mt.Hollowback.
	VK3RMB (Beacon)	432.535 MHz. - Mt.Buninyong.
	VK3RBV (ATV)	426.250 MHz. - Ballarat

ACTIVITIES CLUB NET: Thursday nights at 8 pm. (8.30 pm during Daylight Saving). Freq: 3.610 MHz +/- QRM.

2 METRE SCRAMBLE: Sunday Nights at 7.50 pm. Freq: 146.425 to 146.600 MHz. Inc.

Call back held on VK3RBA 146.750 MHz.

Logs monthly to D.Quirk - P.O. Box 78 - Newstead 3462 (or Meeting) to qualify.

MEETINGS: General Meeting: Last Friday of each month (except December) at 7.30 pm.

Venue: Ballarat Adult & Further Education Centre (BRACE) 602 Urquhart St. (Cnr. Windemere St.)

FOX HUNTING: As arranged during the year.

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE to: The Secretary - BARG Inc.
 Box 1261
 Mail Centre
 Ballarat 3354

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The Minutes

of the Meeting held 19th January 1996



Members and guests were welcomed by President Gordon VK3FGC and Apologies were accepted on behalf of the following VK3s LBA and Val, ZHH, NIZ, CFB, KGL, JFL, WN, AEX, VU and N9NAY.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery were extended to Norm LBA. Hope you are up and about soon.

DOK/DMK.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (as circulated,) were confirmed.

XDQ/DMK

CORRESPONDENCE —

Amateur Radio Magazine.
 Hervey Bay ARC Newsletter.
 G.A.R.C. Newsletter.
 E.M.D.R.C. Newsletter.
 B.A.E.C. Re Meeting Venue for 96 - Refer Gen.Business.

OUT - To W.I.A. Re Eureka Award.

TREASURERS REPORT - Deferred due to Treasurer's absence.

REPORTS AWARDS / PUBLICITY

Favourable response from Ballarat City, generous postage concession. TNX Doug.

QSL'S -

265 cards sent out - 60 received. Good to hear locals are taking advantage of some good conditions.

WICEN

Operators are required for Power Boat 'Ski 80' 10th and 11th. Feb. See FGC.

BBS

Local BBS VK3FBB to close on-02 02 96.

BARG in process of establishing Club BBS. Technical Committee has task well in hand. Hi-speed linking hardware is partially installed and ready for testing. New antenna is on order. Hardline feeder ready to go up tower. AVE to be approached re RPA-8 create greater access RPC-2.

Many thanks to Bob, Dick, and Tom. - Great effort !

FACILITIES

Les spoke of ongoing investigation and up-coming tour with Ballarat City Rec. Officer. Great Les !

XDQ/DMK

GENERAL BUSINESS -

Letter of thanks to VK3IBM Ken for his help and service with VK3FBB. DOK/CAZ

MOTION - Natter Night be discontinued ! (Carried unanimously.) XDQ/VBA

MOTION - That terms of rental proposed by B.A.E.C. be accepted (see correspondence) and B.A.R.G. continue at this venue for 1996. (Carried unanimously.) DMK/HWK

EVENTS CALENDAR FOR 1996.

MEETING CLOSED 8.55 pm.
 NEXT MEETING 23rd. February

Feb 23rd.

March 10th.

March 7th-10th.

March 17th.

April 14th.

T.B.A.

T.B.A.

PACKET - Info for all Venue - Meeting room.

JOHN MOYLE CONTEST

GRAND PRIX

BENDIGO CONVENTION

Fiskville - 11.30 BBQ lunch. (VK3FMC)

INTERNET - Venue SMB.

FLIGHT SIMULATOR - Tullamarine.

Unfortunately the Maryborough Radio Museum is now closed and dis-assembled !!!!

Finally - When you take responsibility on your shoulders, there isn't much space left for chips !

Have a great month ! Cheers Geoff ADB.

B.A.R.G.



MARKET.

URGENTLY REQUIRED

Two (2) ceramic bases to fit QB3/300 (4-125 equivalent). These are large 5 pin bases. If you can help please contact Arthur VK3ENT - 328184. Thanks.

WANTED URGENTLY

Can anyone assist Ron VK3LPM with any information on, or preferably a copy of, a **Schematic Diagram for the ICOM 720A transceiver**. Ron can be contacted on 689477.

J P M I Y X W Z T L S O L D E R G D B S
 E G I L K U J R E I F I T C E R H D R T
 O G E A P O Q X O B H R I V G V D O A O
 X Y J T U Y T T C T R R F S O Y N P T P
 C H I P A R P S Z O I S H O Z M F W O G
 H N H C S L W E A M N C G E E Q U W P X
 S E T I N H U C C L P V A E E P F G M A
 D G E O X Q K D M O L X E P D I O D E T
 N K R M R G K B O B G A E R A O R P Y B
 U D M I O W P J L M Z C B E T C F R H K
 R P I N R B S R O T S I S E R O V P E U
 Y X N S I D E B A N D Y R F R F R N S M
 T I A U D F F B Z N H U Y O R L O E G N
 F H L L W O A C L L L D X F Q H A R U V
 F G N A U C N R R B B R L P P X Z E J K
 Z P A T Y Q K B A R J Q D O M B Z P G O
 K D U I Q M B G A D E D R T U I E M Z C
 G S W O T H U P P P B C T O Z U C A A I
 E B U N Z O Y G Q W I E F Y E M H A R X
 Z T I U C R I C B M U S T H K Y F U M X

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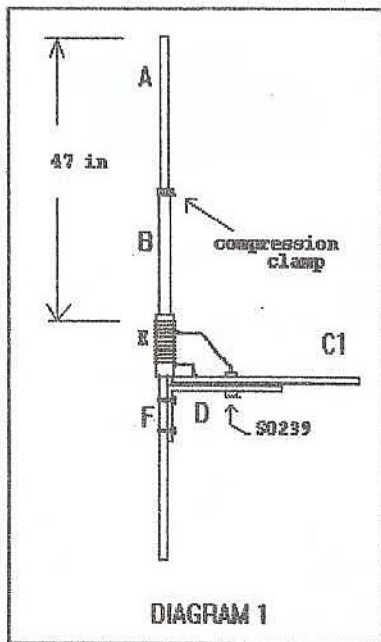
HOT
 from the
 WORKBENCH



SCRAPHEAP SPECIAL!

by Arthur Solomon
VK3ENT

This antenna cost me exactly nothing to build because all the parts came from the scrapheap: from discarded TV antenna tubing and a short length of 3/4 inch PVC conduit. It has an appreciable gain of 3 db over a quarter wave vertical or over a single-section J-pole and is *VERY* much easier to tune. There is nothing new about this antenna: it is simply a copy of the familiar 5/8 vertical used for 2m FM mobile work to which I have added a ground plane in place of the car body. The Diagrams 1 to 4 show the construction quite clearly, but let me add the following comments:



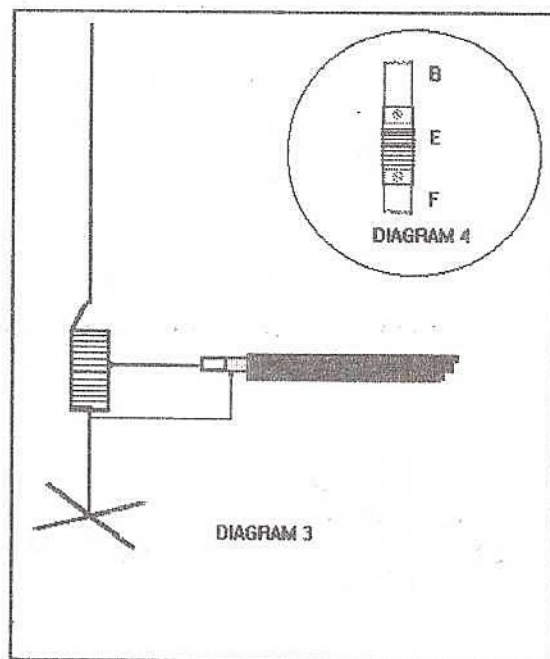
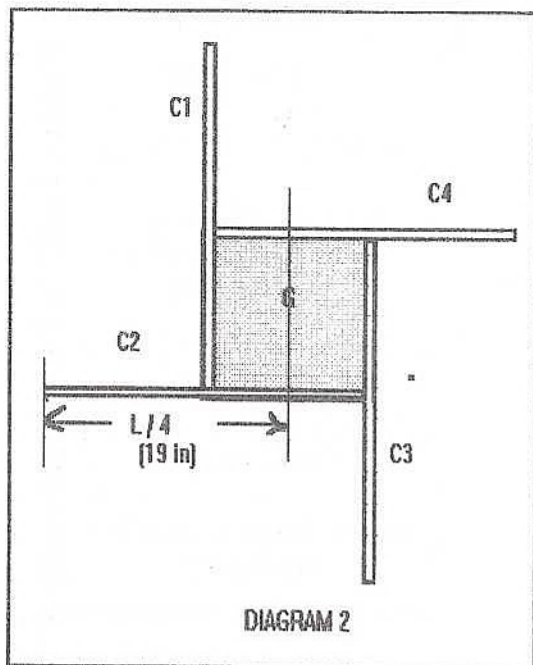
1. G is a piece of aluminium scrap approximately 2-3 inches square and thick enough to be stiff. To this are bolted or screwed the groundplane tubes, C1 - C4, each a quarter wavelength long. Also to G is bolted or screwed the angle section D.

2. A and B and F are also aluminium tubes. These were taken from a discarded TV antenna. A telescopes into B, and B and F fit into a 3 1/2 in length of 3/4 in OD PVC conduit. All of these 'fits' were loose fits and electrician's tape was used to pad out the fit of B and F into E. The actual diameters of these tubes is not important. Make them fit! Although the telescoped section A-B is shown as having an over-all length of 47 inches, make sure that you have some 3 or 4 inches to spare over and above the 47 inches to provide plenty of provision for adjustment.

3. Wind 10 turns of enamelled wire (say 16 SWG) on the PVC section E and make an initial tap about 3 turns down from the top. Space the turns over about 3 inches.

4. Tuning can be done by altering the length A-B and the tap on E. Start with 47 inches for A-B and adjust the tap on E for lowest SWR on a simplex channel of about 146 MHz. — Note: this is the **HARD** way to do it!

5. The **EASY** way to tune the antenna is to borrow BARG's "Antenna Analyser" - MFJ249. With this device you can tune up the antenna in a very few minutes! Tune the antenna for 146 MHz and you will find by careful adjustment of the antenna length and coil tap you will easily obtain an SWR of 1:1 (or very close to it!).





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73 de Bill VK3PH



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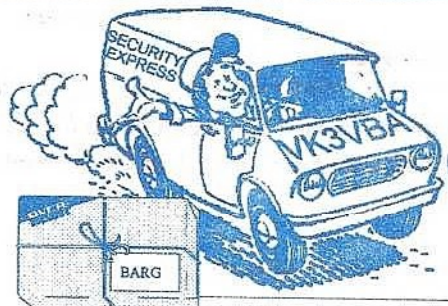
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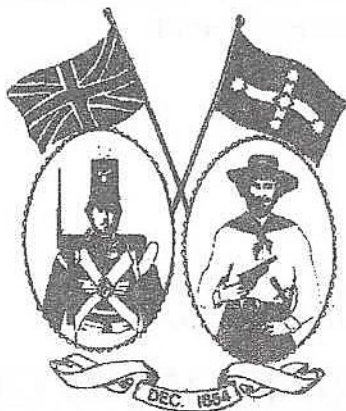
ON THIS DAY
25th. January 1899

On the 25th. January 1899 the manufacture of the first radio sets began at the Wireless Telegraph and Signal Company, in Chelmsford England.

Ron VK3LPM

THE EUREKA AWARD

DETAILS



COMING SOON



JERRY

NO MORE ARTICLES
AVAILABLE
THIS MONTH

COMING EVENTS AND INFORMATION

Thursday 22nd. February - Novice Classes start - BRACE

Friday 23rd February - General Meeting

Saturday 24th. February - EMDRC White Elephant Sale - Box Hill

March 7th-10th. Grand Prix.

March 10th. - John Moyle Contest.

March 17th - Bendigo Convention

March 20th. - Committee Meeting.

April 14th. - Fiskville - 11.30am BBQ.

Monday Nights - Practical Nights.

2M Scramble - Sunday Nights 7.50pm 146.425 to 146.600 Mhz.

Club Net - Thursday Nights 8pm. 3.610 +/- QRM - (8.30pm during Daylight Saving.)

WICEN Training Nights - 4th. Wednesday each month.



B.A.R.G.

THE BALLARAT AMATEUR RADIO GROUP INC.

A GROUP OF RADIO ENTHUSIASTS LICENSED TO EXPERIMENT
WITH LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL RADIO COMMUNICATIONS ON AN AMATEUR BASIS.

NEW MEMBERS ALWAYS WELCOME

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BALLARAT AMATEUR RADIO GROUP INC.

B.A.R.G. NEWS



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